

WHY TEACH TRASH?

Let's Reduce and Recycle: A Curriculum for Solid Waste Awareness contains a series of activities intended to increase students' awareness of the impacts of garbage on the environment, and to teach them about waste prevention and recycling techniques. Although the curriculum focuses on trash, it also addresses other environmental concerns (such as air and water quality), as well as the social and economic issues associated with environmental pollution.

Garbage, and the way we choose to manage it, is an environmental issue that has been gaining attention in recent years, both within the classroom



























































and in the nation as a whole. Americans generate more trash than any other country in the world, and the amount of garbage we create is steadily increasing each year.

Not only is trash a highly visible issue, but it is also one with which every student can relate since EVERYONE generates trash. For this reason, "teaching trash" in the classroom is an excellent way to introduce students to environmental issues in general, to the concept that we all share a responsibility for protecting and maintaining our planet, and to the recognition that through our lifestyles and behaviors each one of us can make a difference.



GRADES K-6

	Activity	Art	Language Arts	Math	Music	Science	Social Studies	Duration
Unit One	1							One to two periods
	2							20 to 40 minutes
	3							20 to 40 minutes
Unit Two	4							20 to 40 minutes
	5							One to two periods
	6							More than two weeks
	7							20 to 40 minutes
	8							20 to 40 minutes
Unit Three	9							20 to 40 minutes
	10							20 to 40 minutes
	11							20 to 40 minutes
	12							One to two periods
	13							20 to 40 minutes
Unit Four	14							20 to 40 minutes
	15							One to two periods
	16							One to two periods
	17							20 to 40 minutes
	18							20 to 40 minutes
Unit Five	19							One to two periods
	20							Three to five periods
	21							One to two periods
	22							20 to 40 minutes
	23							20 to 40 minutes
	24							Minimum three periods
	25							Half day to full day
	26							One to two periods
	27							Half day to full day
	28							

GRADES 7-12

	Activity	Art	Language Arts	Math	Music	Science	Social Studies	Duration
Unit One	1							One to two periods
	2							20 to 40 minutes
	3							20 to 40 minutes
Unit Two	4							20 to 40 minutes
	5							20 to 40 minutes
	6							One to two periods
	7							More than two weeks
	8							20 to 40 minutes
	9							20 to 40 minutes
Unit Three	10							20 to 40 minutes
	11							20 to 40 minutes
	12							20 to 40 minutes
	13							One to two periods
	14							20 to 40 minutes
Unit Four	15							20 to 40 minutes
	16							One to two periods
	17							One to two periods
	18							20 to 40 minutes
	19							20 to 40 minutes
	20							One to two periods
Unit Five	21							Three to five periods
	22							One to two periods
	23							20 to 40 minutes
	24							20 to 40 minutes
	25							Minimum three periods
	26							Half day to full day
	27							Half day to full day
	28							One to two periods
	29							More than two weeks
	30							One to two periods
	31							One to two periods
	32							Three to five periods
	33							One to two periods
	34							One to two periods
	35							One to two periods
	36							Minimum three to five periods



How to Use This Curriculum

This curriculum is divided into two sections: one each for grades kindergarten through 6; and another for grades 7 through 12. Each section contains units addressing key concepts related to solid waste generation and management:

- What is waste?
- How do we manage our waste?
- How does waste affect our resources?
- How can we produce less waste?
- What can we do about the waste we produce?

These units are further divided into hands-on activities that engage students in an exploration of the scientific, economic, and social implications of solid waste issues. Activity components include:

Objective - The purpose of the activity; what students should be able to do or accomplish through the activity.

Vocabulary - The new terms students will need to know as they work through an activity. Vocabulary words are presented in italics when they first appear in the activity procedures, and are defined in a glossary at the back of the curriculum.

Procedure - The directions for conducting an activity in the classroom. The procedures typically consist of activity steps followed by questions that can be used to initiate a discussion or illustrate a point. Any materials or equipment needed to perform the activity also are listed, along with suggestions for expanding the activity through additional projects such as field trips, classroom displays, and homework assignments.

In addition, the curriculum also contains tools to help ease presentation of the activities and make them more relevant to students' and educators' needs, including:

Community Profile Worksheet - A worksheet for estimating local impacts and costs of garbage.

Clip Art - Illustrations and cartoons to engage students and encourage them to use their creativity while participating in the activities.

Glossary - An alphabetical listing of all vocabulary words from the activities along with their definitions.

"Throwaway Three" - A short skit that enables students to explore through the art of performance the various ways that trash has been managed throughout time and to consider recycling as an alternative to disposal.

Contacts - A listing of state solid waste agencies.

Resources - A listing of books, posters, curricula, and other materials that can help illustrate and expand upon the points made in the activities.

Evaluation Form - A short form that educators can complete if they would like to provide feedback to EPA on the effectiveness of the curriculum.

